

Daily Planet

Customer and Employee Relations Directorate,
Internal Relations and Communications Department

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President Bush: 'It is time for America to take the next steps' in human space exploration

President George W. Bush on Wednesday committed the United States to a long-term human and robotic program to explore the Solar System, return humans to the Moon and ultimately, to Mars and beyond. The Space Shuttle's "chief purpose" once it is returned to flight will be to finish construction on the International Space Station, after which the three remaining orbiters will be retired from service in 2010. A new spacecraft, the Crew Exploration Vehicle, will be developed and tested by 2008, and will carry humans to the Moon by 2015 and no later than 2020. The goal is for humans to live and work on the Moon to help prepare technologies needed for sending astronauts to Mars, and possibly other destinations in the Solar System. Also Wednesday, Bush appointed former Secretary of the Air Force Pete Aldrich to chair a commission of private- and public-sector experts to advise him on implementing his vision for America's space program. After saying the nation had not developed a new vehicle to advance human exploration of space in nearly a quarter century, Bush said, "It is time for America to take the next steps."

**Blood drive Friday,
8 a.m.-1:30 p.m.,
north parking lot
Bldg. 4487.
Supplies 'critical.'
See 'Inside
Marshall'**

NASA Administrator Sean O'Keefe to speak Thursday

NASA Administrator Sean O'Keefe will host a special edition of "NASA Update" at 10:30 a.m. CST Thursday. He will discuss President Bush's new vision for America's space exploration objectives. The event will be carried live on NASA TV, Marshall TV, and in Morris Auditorium. Marshall team members can ask questions of O'Keefe by attending the broadcast in Morris Auditorium.

<http://inside.msfc.nasa.gov>